

Says fiscal responsibility should start with Congress

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell today voted against the Fiscal Year 2010 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill, citing concern about increased spending for operating expenses for the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Capitol complex. The bill passed over Mitchell's objection by a vote of 232-178.

"During these difficult economic times it is more important than ever that we are more prudent, thoughtful and careful about the way we budget and spend tax dollars," Mitchell added. "Spending more on congressional operations will not help get the economy back on track. If we expect other parts of the federal government to control spending, we in Congress need to control our own."

Specifically, the \$3.7 billion FY 2010 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill increases the operating budget for the U.S. House of Representatives by 6 percent, following last year's 10 percent increase. It also includes a 17 percent increase for the Architect of the Capitol in FY 2010, which follows a 28 percent increase from last year, for projects like the Capitol Visitors Center, which was completed four years late and \$300 million over budget.

Mitchell voted against the FY09 spending bill, as well as the FY08 Legislative Branch Appropriations Bill. Additionally, earlier this year, Mitchell led a successful effort to stop a pay raise for members of Congress.